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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces the notion of a spiritual component of adventure, with reference to the potential role of adventure within the peace and reconciliation process in Northern Ireland. Influenced by tradition and culture, past constructions of adventure have often associated it with educational benefits and personal development of specific virtues. A deconstruction of adventure focuses on whether adventure furthers the understanding of an individual's experience, or whether, through its location or language, creates a form of paralysis, such as lack of engagement or focus on self-gratification. A new construction of adventure is proposed that requires a radical rethinking: accepting that cultural traditions and desires influence much of adventure, and that adventure offers greater opportunities for holistic than individual development. Adventurous encounters may help us to see the intimate connections between ourselves and the external world and to interact with our "superconsciousness" or spiritual self. The stages of spiritual realization mirror some reactions that people display while experiencing adventure. Reconciliation is a process concerned with identifying the history of broken communities and locating the nature of their disconnection. As dynamic states, reconciliation and peace require the development of skills to communicate and accept alternate perspectives. Adventure assists reconciliation through shared spiritual experience, recognition of our interdependence, and fostering of sense of community. The use of adventure experiences in Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland is briefly described. (Contains 48 references.) (SV)

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The Task of Adventure within the Peace and Reconciliation Process

By Mike Bartle

Introduction

Current views on adventure seem to accept the unknown dimensions of an experience, with *uncertainty of outcome* and the *confronting of opportunities* beyond our initial comprehension frequently used as definitions (Mortlock, 1984, Hunt, 1990 & Hopkins and Putnam, 1993). These experiences of adventure may manifest within physical activity, within the mind of a person, or transcend some spiritual dimension (Rebillot, 1993). The powerful impact of adventure is easily witnessed through physical endeavour, within journeys, expeditions and exploration. What is less clear is how this impact accesses the cognitive, emotional and spiritual dimensions. Do adventurous experiences in some way access the latent aspect of a person's being where, according to Assagioli (1993), virtues or higher values are located? Specifically, is there a spiritual component of adventure and, if so, what are the implications within the process of reconciliation?[1]

The context for introducing the notion of spirituality revolves around the formative ongoing work of the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland. This paper focuses upon adventure within the processes of peace and reconciliation in the contested society of Northern Ireland. This discussion will therefore critically examine the theme of adventure, spirituality and community contesting current understandings of adventure as being limited by cultural constructions. The intent is to construct a view of adventure that synthesises available knowledge and understanding to aid the process of reconciliation. The initial focus of this study reflects upon the claims that are often made of the adventure experience within education, before considering the implications within the reconciliatory process. Not surprisingly, given the investment in current personal and cultural understandings of adventure, any new understanding of the essence of adventure must initially consider such historical antecedents. At the conceptual heart of this investigation is the foundational work of Assagioli (1888-1974), Kaptein (1919-1996) and Fromm (1900-1980), who through their insightful views of humankind provide an

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[1] Reconciliation is concerned with the history of broken communities and seeks to explore the reconnection of these connections.

understanding of adventure that extends into the boundaries of spiritual growth, communal development and notions of desire.

Past Constructions: Attempts to Use and Understand Adventure

The term adventure has come to mean many experiences, which pervade our whole being and evade our descriptions (Mortlock, 1984, Hopkins and Putnam, 1993). Adventure has often been associated with educational benefits and personal development. A tendency to utilise adventure in clarifying specific learning outcomes for individuals, often within a personal and social framework, is frequently discussed within the adventure education literature (Cripps and Dallos 1984; Grey, 1984; Mortlock, 1984; Miles and Priest, 1990; March & Wattchow, 1991; Hopkins and Putnam, 1993).

Historically adventure has been seen as a process involving risk and challenge, with uncertainty providing the central component allowing a person to experience new possibilities of learning about other people, the environment and the individual (Mortlock, 1984). Development relied on committed and enthusiastic practitioners reflecting upon such intuition and practical experience to lend credibility to activities often associated with physical endeavour in an outdoor setting. This position continues to unfold and influence the development of adventure often within the subject area of outdoor education. Given these arguments the initial understanding of adventure was therefore significantly influenced by its location within an educational framework (Hobson 1992; Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Miles and Priest, 1990; and Mortlock, 1984).

By concentrating on the learning outcomes associated with adventurous experiences, research has articulated some intuitive assumptions within adventure frames (Ewert, 1990), stages (Mortlock, 1984) and matrices (Martin & Priest, 1987). These frameworks have been constructed eclectically from psychological and philosophical bases and provide a useful reference point for from which to observe, analyse and validate the outcomes of adventure experiences.

What is clear is that the field of education has explored the spectrum of potentialities of adventurous experiences and suggested some possible outcomes, including determination and effort; "to adventure...is consciously to take up a challenge that will demand the best of our capabilities" (Mortlock, 1984) or "reaching the peak of happiness" (Vogeley, 1992, p186.). The seeking of "emotional and intellectual growth" is suggested by Hopkins and Putnam (1993) or to face a challenge and attain euphoria (Watters, 1994). Furthermore, Rebillot (1993) suggests that individuals impelled into adventurous experiences will experience genuineness by being able to "recognise and respond to the authentic call of adventure" (p8).

Although it would be foolish not to recognise the impact of this institutional setting the concern here is the understanding of the nature or essence of adventure. Do we promote adventure merely because it rejuvenates an interest in outdoor learning, it functions "more as a kind of rallying point than a serious attempt to enter the mainstream of educational debate" (Brookes, 1993, p10). In its present educational form the preference has been to interpret the intensity or outcomes of adventure discerning all manners of benefit either during an experience, or in more contemplative or structured moments afterwards. One such example is that of Reviewing, which has become a key feature in many group sessions.

Reviewing is the term used to identify a period of time where specific techniques and skills provide a focus to stimulate and witness learning (Hunt and Hitchin, 1989). The challenges of facilitating adventure learning often resulted in leaders seeking to champion contemplative and reflective techniques yet jettison the context of the events. This is to say that the fact that the moment was connected to a specific location, vista, time or conditions becomes less important then the techniques used to stimulate reflection. The experience of adventure often becomes divorced from the outdoors and reflective personal observations serve to illuminate individual differences. The development of adventure programmes within the urban setting and school location perhaps mirrors this development (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993).

With the development of safe principles, identification of codes of practice, attention to learning, and the evolution of values, ideas and vision, there developed a coherent role for adventure within the umbrella of outdoor education. Cudmore (1994) provides a more detailed analysis of such development within the British education framework. To assist in this educative process, elements of humanistic psychology, psychotherapy, social psychology and experiential learning have been successfully applied and appear to have resonated well with observed practice (Cripps and Dallos, 1984, Hopkins & Putnam, 1993). Specifically, "adventure based counselling" (Schoel, Prouty and Radcliffe, 1988), the developmental earth education path of Van Matre (1990) and development training (Loynes, in Miles and Priest, 1990) represent three innovative and emergent areas. Additionally, the conception of adventure as a form of leisure suggests that cultural prerequisites will facilitate leisure based understanding. Giddens (1990) provides a comprehensive analysis of the societal changes, from the failure of the grand narratives of Marxism, Capitalism, etc. to the "Utopian Realism" of self-determination through experiences in leisure. The tendency to pay greater attention to how adventure can assist our modern culture and its associated tensions and needs, often through personal, social and environmental interaction and awareness has resulted in diverse and insightful research (Heywood, 1994).

Jarvie & Maguire (1994) propose two interconnected and tentative leisure based hypotheses concerning adventure. Initially, they suggest that people learn about adventure not through exposure to the outdoors but in relation to other people in social settings. Secondly, they ask whether adventure has become a socially conditioned experience which people now believe they need and which can be achieved by participating in consumer culture.

This perspective implies that adventure is diluted within modern society and its characteristic social systems which attempt to incorporate, functionalise and commodify adventure. The development in adventure tourism (Plog, 1991), and the success of adventure theme parks such as "Euro-Disney" suggest an "eliciting or imitating excitement akin to that which is generated in "real" life situations..." (Jarvie & Maguire, 1994, p143). Adventure is therefore promoted, influenced and controlled within a modern social framework. These critical interpretations might include arguments from a cultural basis to consider how society has influenced our understanding of adventure.

In its present form adventure is commodified. This suggestion is certainly not new. Riffenburgh's (1993) comprehensive study linking the press to explorers in the nineteenth century provides ample evidence of society's historic interest in adventure: "the public could be intoxicated by exciting reports about heroic struggles to master nature, particularly in what were perceived as... most dangerous environments...." (p196). The modern image of adventure perhaps differs very little from Riffenburgh's observations,

that experience is very desirable and sought after, adventure is able to provide socially desirable qualities.

The role of the press and media in creating an underlying interest in what may be termed "socially acceptable adventure" and dissolving it into sensation, at the expense of a holistic understanding of this phenomenon has yet to be fully understood. It is apparent, however, that excitement and adventure is highlighted within the press. For example, the public debate surrounding the tragic death of Alison Hargreaves highlighted the tension between role expectations as a mother and wife and the rights or desire for pleasurable excitement, adventure and self-fulfilment. Headlines such as "Should climber Alison Hargreaves have given up her sport for the sake of her children" (Independent on Sunday, August 1995).

If these arguments are accepted, our normative assumptions support adventure, perhaps trivialised by an exaggerated physical focus and diluted by a lack of holistic understanding, within an educational system seeking a cross-curricular champion. Secondly, perceptions of adventure based on obsolete inventions by tradition and culture, and influenced by a pluralistic social framework often reinforce specific virtues, which are mistakenly attached to adventure. Thus far we have at best preferred to interpret the intensity of adventure for learning purposes or discerned all manners of sublimation in more contemplative moments. It is perhaps more important to understand the facets or essence of such an experience, than to rely upon temporal, cultural or spatial attempts to define such a sensation. It is to this concern that the discussion will now turn.

A Deconstruction of Adventure

The central issue is whether adventure, as we currently understand it, furthers the understanding of an individual's experience. Or, whether through its location or language, creates a form of paralysis, regardless of the educational, therapeutic or reconciliatory framework. The transmission of adventure experiences through language produces cultural memories, which act in ways to confirm our membership and position within a social context, which we call society. However this language also provides boundaries through the communicative structure available. Adventure, when verbally expressed seems to become a translation of an event rather than an explanation of an experience which can transcend the qualities of beauty, compassion, comprehension, creativity, faith, aestheticism, joy, serenity, peace, vitality and fear, as highlighted by Assagioli (1993) within the framework of psychosynthesis.[2] His position suggests that the experience of awe or the appreciation of some of the above qualities illuminates an unknown element to our cultural understanding of adventure. This deeper emotional response cannot be articulated through expressive cultural symbols such as language. A comprehension of adventure is perhaps like trying to explain how we experience the colour blue.

Furthermore, such paralysis may manifest itself in different ways (e.g., as inactivity or lack of engagement in a person). Pretending to be unafraid whilst involved in a new and adventurous activity requires the separation of the person from experiencing potential inner functioning. The intention may be to maintain a facade, to remain unchanged because the fear of losing control, even of expression is too great. This stance perceives

[2] Psychosynthesis refers to a method of psychological development and self-realisation founded by Roberto Asosagioli (1888-1974) and not as often thought a school of psychology. It is sometimes referred to as a psychology which includes a transpersonal or spiritual approach

change as being too threatening, because change inevitably requires a reassessment of self. Or, the complexity of evaluating external and internal reactions to self-expression is perceived as too difficult. Additionally, to remain focused on cognitions or emotions, such as fear or reassessment, is to locate oneself in the present, to foster awareness on current responses and behaviours. This moving away from the facade of "faking" demonstrates a genuine or deeper reflection of the self, which does not seek power or fame. What Fromm (1995) would argue as a move from having to being.

This experience of authenticity is appealing. Some adventure programmes seek to maximise these instances without comprehension of the relational impact on individuals. Past programmes for disaffected youth sometimes failed, albeit unknowingly, to locate adventure laden programmes within such relationships. The consequences were many. Adventure was seen as a form of punishment, to be endured, as a method for focusing personal tensions and energies, "as a means of releasing energy and frustration" (Inmate, Grendon Underwood Experimental Prison, 1991). Or adventure remained as an experiential "carrot" only available upon reaching some personal and social standard. Fromm (1995) and Van Matre (1993) warn of the lack of relationship to communities and lifestyles that such lack of insight can produce.

Another form of paralysis is that of instant self-gratification. The argument that adventure can assist narcissistic tendencies is not new. Fromm (1995) has argued that much of what we desire focuses not upon self-development as suggested, but upon self-gratification. He recognises that the consumer world of desire results in an addiction to having sensation rather than being aware of our senses. He argues that without an understanding of being by facing personal difficulties and suffering through change is important for mental and spiritual growth. Within the world of having, adventure experiences are a demonstration of individual desire, success and the seeking of control. For example, choosing to pay $25,000 to go to on adventurous journey to an exotic location reflects the position of free choice rather than an individual understanding of the culture of choice. Whether these opportunities are able to enhance one's own self-efficacy rather than illuminate the feeling the success of having generates remains unclear. However Fromm (1995) is clear on one point, that this freedom is really an "unfreedom." He argues that, though we are free to make this choice and that this may appear to be an expression of our own desire, we are mistaken. This seeking of adventure, no matter how beautiful or fulfilling it seems, is desirable only when someone else suggests it is worth having, already possesses it or desires it. According to Kaptein (1993), we are influenced by what someone else desires or possesses; we are therefore influenced by someone else's adventures. The notion of independence is therefore an illusion reliant upon parasitic experience, as Pliny the Elder in AD 77 so eloquently states: "we use other people's feet when we go out, we use other people's eyes to recognise things, we use another person's memory to greet people, we use someone else's help to stay alive - the only things we keep for ourselves are our pleasures" (Zeldin, 1996). Kaptein (1993) argues that even these pleasures are dependent upon another who defines what is a pleasurable desire. While Pliny could not have realised the extent of man's desire to guarantee narcissistic pleasure the "smorgasbord" of commodified adventure experiences awaits those whose desire mirrors this perspective (Kaptein, 1991). In a psychological sense the person who becomes desire oriented may eventually use adventure as an external object to exist, to provide a sense of identity. They are who they are only insofar as they have the adventure experience or a similar experience (Fromm, 1995).

The conceptual root of this argument relates to Kaptein's (1991) notion of mimesis and Fromm's bi-polar construct of having and being. It is difficult to separate them completely, however they both agree that the layers of society provide a sense of being through having and desiring and this generates conflict. Kaptein (1993) argues that the impact of our complex modern culture through these societal layers also remove us further from an awareness of our sense of relationship. Although discussed in detail later on, it is important to initially question how modern society has commodified adventure for an increasingly urgent modern lifestyle.

Within this context, the qualities attached to the adventure experience have become a projected symbol of desire. Modern society and the mind become instruments through which desires and sensations of adventurous experiences, directly or vicariously, are sought. Adventure in this sense merely cultivates the worship of the instant and temporary sensual pleasure; as Krishnamurti (1964) warns "...as every sensation comes to an end, and so we proceed from one sensation to another; and every sensation strengthens the habit of seeking further sensation" (p73). As consumers of pleasure, the memory and recognition of past adventures highlight a perceived need for more, modern society seeks increasingly exciting methods to replace one adventure experience with another.

Such direction to accumulate experiences in order to self-develop suggests a deep expression of our true personality. However Assagioli (1993) would contend this view. This expression is a form of "egotistical satisfaction"; the desire to get more from life is founded not on some evolving configuration of awareness but upon an imaginary myth of human perfection and success. The seeking of adventure is based upon a belief that mythical qualities are associated with adventure and that such experiences will bestow virtues honours and esteem upon oneself.

Riffenburgh (1993) suggests how explorers and adventurers promoted these qualities through a number of powerful iconographies in the late nineteenth century. It could be argued that in modern society these images might be even more powerful. Technological support and sensationalism has perhaps helped create for the media, its largest and most receptive audience. Thus allowing adventure to become, in many instances an extension of the "living room." The effortless comfort of the armchair serves up the desire to adventure in an appetising and instantaneous manner.

According to Riffenburgh (1993), there was actually little resemblance between the adventure as described by the popular press and that experienced by those involved in exploration. Stories of adventure were constructed specifically for a hero-worshipping public, often a select audience, and this merely reinforced stereotypical notions of the qualities which adventurers supposedly held. In more recent times, the "great person" image may have receded; however, the qualities of adventure are still marketed for the consumer. For example, Bonnington's latest adventure can be experienced via the internet. In seeking these supposed qualities, the belief exists that these qualities or virtues can be acquired because commodified adventure experiences can be purchased.

As an indicator of successful living in the late twentieth century, the cultural kindling and promotion of adventure has led, not to the unique qualities of adventure being enhanced, but towards the commodification and addiction of sensation and experience. Adventure helps to form a sense of identity, though it is one based on a false sense of experience, reliant upon having or desiring. We function not as a person but as an instrument where interests are focused merely on narcissistic fascination and consumption from the "smorgasbord" of modern adventure (Fromm, 1995). To understand adventure then, we need to consider how adventurous experiences can dislocate us from our own

sense of desire and simultaneously access through our present field of awareness[3], that part of us which processes our "sensations, images, thoughts, emotions, feelings, desires and impulses" (Parfitt, 1990, p17).

A New Construction of Adventure

> I believe that courage is all too often mistakenly seen as the absence of fear. If you descend by rope from a cliff and are not fearful to some degree, you are either crazy or unaware. Courage is seeing your fear in a realistic perspective, defining it, considering the alternatives and choosing to function in spite of risk. (Leonard Zunin in Schoel and Stratton, 1990)

Zunin's reference warns of the dangers in naively associating virtues with adventure. He further questions a view of adventure, which fails to recognise, accept or integrate a person into the world. Adventure, in his view, acts as a changing intellectual, literary or recreational fashion where words such as risk, challenge and fear hold romantic and escapist connotations which some would suggest are becoming increasingly and strangely distant to us (Bartlett, 1993 & Van Matre, 1993). Such estrangement is intensified as we seek an understanding not within the subtle and complex processes of nature's balance or human spirit, but within a timescale and culture that seeks to utilise and master both the natural world and the organisation of human life (Watts, 1958).

For some, this mastery is concerned with control over our own destiny as in achieving personal desires, or freedom from life's responsibilities. Adventure is seen as being able to transcend structures, helping a person escape from an everyday life, which is seen and felt to be mundane, narrow or painful. But surely this is an illusion. To value the experience of adventure and subsequently life as an adventure, we must come to understand our own realistic position in the world, our personal competencies and desires, and how adventure is defined within our culture.

I am not questioning the dedication or desire to establish and provide further credit for adventure as a medium of learning or development. However, it is difficult to entertain the transformation that adventure evokes or the significance of the experience to the individual within the frameworks currently available. I would suggest that through exposure to adventurous experiences deeply rooted psychic material is disturbed and this provides access to new understandings and opportunities for growth. It is the understanding of these encounters that require greater understanding.

Reflecting upon Rebillot's (1993) ideas and synthesising personal observations, I would like to suggest that we typically confront or experience adventure in four different ways. The first is that we recognise an experience or situation to be frightening or disturbing, yet decide to continue to engage the experience. It is in the acknowledgement and recognition that we can function in conjunction with a feeling of fear that allows for learning to occur. The acceptance of being frightened seems to dissipate resistance, making it more possible or acceptable to proceed. In recognising this inner state and deciding to continue, we are also identifying an ability to attend to our anxieties and fantasies. The important aspect here is not the perception of the adventure but the

[3] Field of awareness is a term used within psychosynthesis to describe the place where all our states of mind are brought into focus or consciousness.

acceptance of feeling of fear and the capacity explore the fear. Such effort may emerge from self-determination, an external support, or through some past experience.

The second way we confront adventure occurs when we recognise it to be cathartic. Through the increased psychic engagement which may accompany an adventurous or challenging experience comes a significant change in the level of functioning or a release of energy. Such liberation may offer the individual access to a higher type of psychological being, what Assagioli (1995) referred to as "psychological mountaineering." The adventure experience changes the individual's inner and outer world. The consequence is the release of energy or access to aspects of the self such as aesthetic appreciation, inspiration, or intuition, which provide a different relationship of the person to their own psyche.

The third one I once witnessed as an outdoor instructor at the top of a viaduct peeled the fingers of a teenager off a wall, as he prepared for an abseil. Even the accompanying teacher was colluding with the instructor by saying, "everyone else today and in your 'year' has abseiled, come on!" The student was not allowed to say no. If someone is wrestling with resistance and finding genuine difficulty in overcoming an adventure or challenge, they need to be able to find honour in stopping and saying, "No, I don't want to do this." Being able to say no as an individual and remain free to join in again without a problem is a challenge often greater than simply enduring something traumatic or painful. The will to say "no" may provide an equally important picture of oneself; it allows expression to the diversity between people. Needless to say the opportunity to reflect and act upon personal feelings of safety by withdrawing should be available, and it should be stated clearly.

Rebillot (1993) refers to the fourth and final way in which people confront adventure as "passive resistance." The person neither attends to the challenge nor makes a statement concerning withdrawal. They wait, seeking an exit, something or someone to hide behind, or an excuse for mediocre performance. Or they pretend to be doing something constructive. This ritual format may be manipulative, passive or aggressive; whichever guise it takes the difficulty is in recognising and dealing with it.

Mortlock (1984) suggests that exposure to adventurous experiences helps the participant discover and confront their "threshold of adventure." Or as Rebillot (1993) suggests, the process of adventure "deliberately calls upon your resistance." Only through confronting such challenges (or resistance) can you encounter adventure. The reward may not be initially forthcoming, and relies upon the individual returning and confronting their individual and communal position. If we acknowledge that such impact is not always instantaneous and that the contents of the experience continue to exist perhaps in the unconsciousness then we are faced with identifying different patterns of growth for different individuals.

Adventure within this framework, is not simply an experience vessel to which more adventure is added. The additive approach to adventure experiences may be appropriate in the recreational use of adventure activities when the consumer demands more adventure, more pleasure, more activities. However, individual development is not achieved by simply providing more of something, in this case adventure. Individual development is also not concerned with those definitions of the therapy that define therapy as removing some psychological malady from a person.

This view suggests that the use of adventure to try to identify or expel the psychologically impaired parts of the person is flawed. Experiences that place people on the extreme limits of comfort or understanding, are not necessarily ideal for assessing

individual functioning. If someone expresses anger when witnessing some aspect of war, we don't try and rid the person of anger. Rather we seek to understand their perception of war and alternative worldviews. Reflecting upon an adventurous experience should similarly help locate and stimulate our sense of connection to a human, natural and universal community and not seek to rid past experiences.

The transformation needed is not in the setting of a more refined or specific adventure experience, but in changing our understanding of adventure to incorporate new directions and understandings. Such change requires a radical rethinking of current structures. Firstly, we need to accept that cultural traditions and desires influence much of adventure. Secondly, that adventurous occurrences offer greater opportunities to provide a more holistic than individual development.

According to Assagioli (1993), this comprehension has several levels. On the surface and in our present form of consciousness, we have preferred to interpret the intensity or outcomes of adventure for the purposes of individual benefit and rivalry, either during an adventure experience, or in more contemplative or structured moments afterwards. We have mistakenly assumed that self-focus leads to self-development. In doing so we have allowed the notion of self-gratification to shadow an extensive exploration of the individual. This mirrors the broad cultural fascination leading towards individualisation.

On another level, adventurous encounters may help us see some of the external world as an intimate connection to ourselves. The importance of this is clear: "it determines our actions, our most important decisions, it gives us faith... or scepticism" (Assagioli, 1995). Intimate glimpses of the human potential through such experiences help us to understand our own pilgrimage through life. It could be said that these encounters offer interactions with the "superconscious"[4] or spiritual self.

Adventure and Spirituality

The term adventure is further confused when we include ideas of spirituality. The word spiritual is unclear and difficult to locate; if there is any word that lends itself readily to misunderstanding and confusion, it is the word "spirit" (Assagioli, 1995). It has sometimes mistakenly been used to define observable levels of energy. "The person has spirit" is often said to reflect observable acts such as bravery, or levels of energy in adverse conditions. A spirited performance may be defined to explain an outstanding performance or particular facet of participation. Or we say someone is in "high spirits" when they seem happy or even estatic. Spiritual may refer to a persons mannerisms. Spirituality can also be seen in serenity and is usually referenced to forms of contemplation, silence or renunciation.

The difficulty continues when we consider words that frequently surround spirituality. Truth, faith, religion, fear, soul, self and God introduce semantic and philosophical difficulties. Is spirituality aligned with religion, belief and faith and is it possible to separate religion from the spirit? Expressing religion as a "cumulative tradition," Fowler (1995) suggests that belief is demonstrated through faith. We therefore witness a dynamic relationship between spiritual and religious structures, which are often difficult to define. This wish to attach religion to spirituality is founded upon elements of transcendental growth as well as the desire to recruit people to a set of beliefs as a way of being.

[4] Used within the framework of psychosynthesis, it is a realm of the unconsciousness from which we receive our higher intuitions and inspirations.

Spiritual association adds value and credibility to religion. Alternatively, spirituality is often claimed to provide meaning to locate a sense of wonder, awe, ecstasy, beauty and compassion. Spirituality can connect to community through sense of universality and harmony. As Assagioli (1995) states, "Spiritual development in a person is a long and arduous adventure, a journey through strange lands, full of wonders" (p116).

The conceptual problem which Assagioli defines is that human experiences consist not only of the present and the inevitability of the past, but also that transpersonal and spiritual experiences that help to shape our own future. Through the comprehensive approach known as psychosynthesis which is sometimes defined as "a method of spiritual realisation which includes psychology," (Parfitt, 1990) Assagioli provides an opportunity to consider a wider framework in which to explore adventure. Reflecting upon Giddens (1990) view that "the future is yet to be colonised," Assagioli, (1995) confronts and debates this issue as part of the model of psychosynthesis.

Experiencing the superconsciousness and the spiritual Self, according to Assagioli (ibid.) is the same as experiencing any other aspect of the unconsciousness. Certain experiences and encounters allow these aspects to break into our field of consciousness or awareness. The suggestion is that under certain conditions, adventurous experiences provide access between the conscious and unconscious minds. It is impossible to summarise in this paper the 50 years of psychospiritual reflections and research of Assagioli; however, in relation to adventure there are two major points. Firstly, it is possible for us through such adventurous experience, to reconnect with the transpersonal or spiritual realms within us. Secondly, these realms can manifest within the society in which we live, if we allow such experiences to transform the way in which we function and relate to our lives. He continues to provide further insight by identifying five important stages to spiritual realisation, which are:

> The crises preceding spiritual awakening;
> The crises produced by spiritual awakening;
> The reactions which follow spiritual awakening;
> The phases in the transformation process;
> The dark night of the soul. (Assagioli, 1995, p117)

Assagioli (1995) argues that this connection is often painful, beset with trauma and dilemma and consequently often avoided. The description of these stages often mirrors some of the reactions people display while experiencing adventure. From an initial feeling of depersonalisation, through floods of light, understanding and a sense of release, the illumination by spiritual crisis, according to Assagioli (1995) creates a number of reactions including a "state of grace" (Parfitt, 1990 & Powers, 1993). Bartlett (1993) considers spiritual connections through the activity of mountaineering, and talks of the deeply private reflections upon life. Accordingly, Assagioli (1995) suggests that the ascent is followed by a slow purification through suffering and leading onto spiritual resurrection. Assagioli often uses mountaineering allegory to convey notions of ascent and descent, however beyond this psycho-spiritual symbolism, he suggests the physical journey provides both comparison and assistance (see also Shipton, 1943, within the context of expeditions for a socio-psychological interpretation).

Choosing to experience difficulty and hardship, even the desire to escape everyday life and the inexplicable fascination exerted by unknown landscapes, seascapes and skyscapes provide examples of spiritual connection to outdoor and adventurous

experiences. Through adventure experiences, important insights which have broad relevance to our life as a whole may emerge (Miller, 1975). The relationship between outdoor experiences and spirituality is certainly not new. Pilgrimages, quests, benevolent service, rites of passage and journeys into unknown environments were often seen as ways for a person to gain learning and wisdom. As John Muir (in Teale, 1982) hinted at: "I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in" (p. 311). For Muir, this outdoor journey became an inward quest.

Often shamans, yogis, priests, religious figures and many other individuals claim to have experienced states of consciousness "above" or "beyond" that which may be termed "normal" (Assagioli, 1995). Csikszentmihalyi (1993) referred to these people as transcenders, people who gain insight and transcendence and are able to function regardless of the complexity of consciousness.

As important as this awakening of spirituality is the readiness and capacity for humanity and harmony. Adventurous experiences that provide internal meaning without revealing external connections can lead to imbalance or reinforce egotistical concern. The self-defined or enlightened being or spurious mystic caricature is often unable or unaware of the potential application beyond the limits of their own experience. Without attachment, spirituality merely personifies an experience and the surrounding natural forces. Without connection, spirituality merely feeds illusions of being (Fromm, 1995). This debate suggests that the fundamental importance of the adventurous experience is the linking of the individual to the human spirit and the transformative qualities synthesised by the individual within the modern world and the increased ability to define oneself within relationships and communities.

The Impact of Desire

Attempts to bring comprehensibility to the diverse area of adventurous experience and behaviour have relied on frameworks that ignore some of the spiritual essence of adventure in favour of personal and social development. Some of these developments are more concerned with having experiences rather than locating the meaning or understanding within the inner realms of the psyche according to Fromm (1995) and Kaptein (1993). They suggest that this orientation for having and the associated satisfaction which currently permeates our modern society, actually weakens the inclination for active effort, discipline or self-realisation.

Although recent trends towards self-awareness, which focus upon fulfilment and development, suggest recognition of the need for change to include spiritual realms of energy, this is not so according to Fromm (1995). Offers of instant enlightenment or easy steps to success, suggest an orientation towards having and not necessarily being. The importance of self-awareness is crucial, however there is a need to understand the inner relationship with ourselves and others in creating and shaping our lives. But we cannot solve these problems by trying to quickly rid ourselves of difficulties or conflict, often by placing the blame on another (scapegoating[5]) or an experience elsewhere (Kaptein, 1993).

The work of Roel Kaptein and Eric Fromm, offer penetrating insights into human desire and awareness and suggest that an affinity with adventurous experiences or

[5] Kaptein (1991) suggests that scapegoating, which is an inevitability of culture, is the symbol for defining the ëgoodiesí and ëbaddiesí. As such we can always show that the ëbaddiesí are the others.

sensation may develop through what Kaptein (1991), calls mimetic desire or rivalry[6]. According to Kaptein, mimetic desire is a social phenomenon. However interference from past experiences or other persons who act as models for us to imitate and rival, can create a web of desire and rivalry which may lead us into possible conflict. This desire to experience adventure becomes problematic only when our everyday lives become disrupted by mimetic desire. This is not to deny what we have experienced, or what we hope to achieve, merely to recognise the possible interference that imitative desire can have on our conscious state.

If this web of desire is accurate, adventure as a desired sensation or object becomes a paradox. It is both a desirable sensation and experience that we seek (resulting in possible neurosis). Yet the very nature of the experience of adventure may serve to dislocate us from past and future desires; we become focused upon the present sensation or experience. Adventure through its very nature of uncertainty blots out learned behaviours, allowing us to act, free from desire, with spontaneity, creativity and intuition. This suggests that either Kaptein's theoretical framework is incomplete, or adventure is a fundamental experience, a primordial harmony existing within us.

These differences provide two fundamental directions, according to Fromm (1995). In one direction there are those who seek acclaim in the accumulation of material possessions and experiences. This orientation concerns having or the desire to have. Such attainment recognises success and self-liberation through having, may include your work and life position, and the knowledge and power to control. This direction also includes the collection of experiences, which reflects mastery of opportunities available and of the society in which they are created. Achievement is applauded, often regardless of the impact upon others or the world around.

There is almost nothing which cannot be seen as an object of desire, according to Kaptein, (1991). Even the desire to control others is evidence of people becoming the desired object (you do not need to own someone to control them). The history of slavery and prostitution is testament to the physical desire to have others; we seek others to assist our pleasure desire (Fromm, 1995). It does not matter whether someone has or has not; it is the orientation towards the desire or orientation of having which is of concern.

Adventure then, seems to exist within both arenas. For those able to celebrate such opportunities able to exert personal autonomy, adventure is available, to desire and have more or better experiences. Faster, higher, more exotic occurrences on a more frequent basis and thereby obtaining greater virtues and honours are signs of this orientation. The desire to determine one's life, existence and meaning are measured by the number of experiences amassed. Adventure for these people has become an object of having.

However, Fromm (1995) warns of the illusion of easy awareness shortcuts to greater life possibilities, or believing that through this vehicle success can remove difficulties or pain from life. Reflecting upon Girardian concepts Kaptein (1993) suggests that even feelings generated by good experiences become obstacles. Adventure becomes an object of desire to generate good feelings and the more we seek the object, the more we become dependent on this object to provide the feelings.

Alternatively, adventure as a spotlight can focus upon problems and development and breakthrough this property structure of the mind, accessing new modes of behaviour and

[6] Mimetic desire or rivalry refers to the central theme of mimesis. As a human condition Kaptein (ibid.) suggests that without being conscious of imitation, we are always desiring and as a result, we are always liable to rival, unless some external mediation intervenes.

practice. The smorgasbord of adventure experiences should represent more than society's benefits or how to use different communities. The task of adventure is to introduce spiritual realisation and recognise that we exist in relationships that function as mirrors to help us understand the process of growth and change, through such relational connections mimesis can be examined.

Adventure, Reconciliation and Community

Reconciliation is a process concerned with identifying the history of broken communities, and seeks to locate the nature of such disconnection. According to Kaptein (1991), such disconnection is rooted in scapegoating, rivalry and culture. The reconciliation process seeks to recognise the conditions that dislocate people at an intra, inter and external level and provide connections, which facilitate experiences of affirmation and empathy. Opportunities to share personal and historical stories often afford increased awareness and seek a gradual stabilisation within the communities in which we live. Reconciliation and peace are therefore dynamic states; they are not endings or conclusions.

Such conditions often require the development of opportunities to communicate and the skills to accept and empathise alternative perspectives. Additionally, experiences which build a deeper awareness of the connections to life and which foster a sense of community, beyond the fascination of cultural and personal boundaries, are introduced. Perhaps Mortlock's (1984) suggestion of "universal harmony" adds practical credibility to adventure as a vehicle in the reconciliation process, when he mentions adventure assisting the self partake of both individuality and universality: a position which includes wholeness, truth and love.

Both Mortlock (ibid.) and Assagioli (1995) note the potential of spiritual experience transcending our typical reverence for desire and accessing different understandings of community. This debate considers the adequacy of adventure in assisting reconciliation through the connecting fabric of shared spiritual experience. Such experiences seek to provide freedom from mediocre cultural relationships and access, partly through spiritual energies, opportunities to explore new ways of feeling, knowing and behaving. Additionally, interaction with traditional cultures, landscapes and the wisdom of native heritage's provide rich images to help unearth our past and infuse outdoor and adventurous experiences within our own sense of community.

In understanding that identity does not exist in a static or isolated state nor are the experiences of community and culture from which we emerge. Indeed, so are the earth or cosmic communities from which everything is ultimately emergent. Hence these relationships and connections can only effectively exist when they do so in an affirmed and recognisably interdependent way. This is not some attempt to invent a connected tradition because we feel dislocated, but a genuine recognition of our interdependence and the need to foster this sense of community. Perhaps the starting point of reconciliation is a recognition that complete reconciliation requires a reconnection with all the communities to which we belong. Our human sense of adventure and not the consumption of adventure, is a primordial part of all communities.

A brief story of "Corrymeela"

> In genuine community there are no sides. It is not always easy but by the time they reach community the members have learned how to give up cliques and factions. They have learned how to listen to each other and how not to reject each other...A community is a group that can fight gracefully. (Peck, 1988)

One such story, which identifies reconciliation within a present conflictual situation, is that of the Corrymeela Community. The word Corrymeela stems from the Irish phrase hill of harmony. In the midst of contested societies such as that in Northern Ireland, the Corrymeela Community has acted as a stable community to foster peace and reconciliation. Founding members understood the importance of assisting those social activities and movements, which bring people from different and diverse social, political, cultural and religious traditions together.

Many contested societies experience great difficulties in relationships between the different traditions within it. These focus upon the relationship of each tradition to the law, state, employment, equity and other traditions. The Corrymeela Community seeks to address these themes whilst seeking to build opportunities for people to meet together and share concerns and needs. Using residential and serial experiences individuals, groups and communities, Corrymeela provides space and focused opportunities to "tell your own story" and listen to those of other people in an atmosphere of trust and hope.

Corrymeela believes that, in the past, many reconciliation and communities have limited their focus. There is a need to build bridges across the fault-lines that break and separate our humanity, our community, and our fundamental relationship to the Earth. Through an integrated and sequential programme, the Corrymeela Community aims to reintroduce notions of community, service, leadership and development using residential and serial experiences. Adventure learning in this context is used to aid the development of personal, cultural, spiritual and communal connectedness.

Conclusion

Is the value of adventure a reflection of the value attributed to living? We see people in adventurous experiences expressing the joys and trials of life, often through enjoyment and struggle. Or is adventure a complexity perhaps still beyond our capacity to adequately articulate it? Intuitively, we suspect adventure to be life itself and yet some of this unknown picture does not seem to fit. Fitting in is about fitting in to the largest and smallest pictures possible. We have sought to fit adventure to a personal lifestyle, which focuses upon culturally defined constructs.

Adventure is not an observable fact of behaviour or a direct aspect of experience. It is a term for conditions, which we construct because the invention seems to bring comprehensibility to a diverse area of experience and behaviour. However, such comprehension is incomplete. A current construction of adventure fails to account for the manifestations, which pervade the higher connections of our lives.

Beyond the socially constructed experiences and activities, which have built-in obsolescence, adventure experiences can breakthrough narcissistic selfishness and egotism, from desiring and having adventure to an understanding of being in adventurous experiences. A change is needed, from the seeking of the guaranteed sensation, to the

innocence of a first adventure. The task of adventure is not to seek clarity by organising our lives around desired states of separated experience or achievement, but to meet each new adventure as a synthesis of all we comprehend. To help us use impulses and capacities in harmony with potentialities, thus freeing ourselves from past judgements, perceptions and conditionings (Assagioli, 1993).

After years of searching, the seeker was told to go to a cave, in which he would find a well. "Ask the well what is truth," he was advised, "and the well will reveal it to you." Having found the well, the seeker asked the most fundamental question. And from the depths came the answer: "Go to the village crossroad: there you shall find what you are seeking." Full of hope and anticipation, the man ran to the crossroad, to find only three rather uninteresting shops. One shop was selling pieces of metal, another sold wood, and the third sold thin wires. Nothing and no one seemed to have much to do with the revelation of truth.

Disappointed, the seeker returned to the well to demand an explanation, but he was told only: "You will understand in the future." When the man protested, all he got were echoes of his own shouts. Indignant for having been made a fool of — or so he thought at the time — the seeker continued his wanderings in search of Truth. As years went by, the memory of his experience at the well gradually faded until one night, while he was walking in the moonlight, the sound of sitar music caught his attention. It was wonderful music, and it was played with great mastery and inspiration.

> Profoundly moved, the truthseeker felt drawn toward the player. He looked at the fingers dancing over the strings. He became aware of the sitar itself. And then suddenly he exploded in a cry of joyous recognition: the sitar was made out of wires and pieces of metal and wood just like those he had once seen in the three stores and had thought to be without any particular significance. (Ferrucci, 1982. P. 21-22)

Meaning comes when connections and transformations are brought from one instance to bear upon another. Reconnecting to the experience of adventure as a primordial instinct we need to reconcile the differences within and between mankind as well as the many communities to which we connect. Such a change is not without pain and perhaps it is this very pain which signifies adventure's association within a therapeutic and reconciliation process. In this parasitic work, the constant and active interchange of knowledge and understanding sought, suggests a need for transformation to break the "either or" world towards the reality of the "both and" world (Kaptein, 1991). The real test is, after all, to understand adventure in the midst of all life (Assagioli 1995).

However, such transformation lies not in a retreat to traditional or frugal lifestyles where scientific and technological discoveries are jettisoned or ignored, in favour of some venerable tradition of contemplation or renunciation. Nor should we rely upon "enlightenment" programmes with guarantees of short cuts to self-awareness. The tension and conflicts within contemporary life have resulted in an increasing number of retreats and courses offering paths to inner peace and being (Housden, 1995). According to Fromm (1995), these "spiritual elevators" offered by our individualised consumer-oriented world remove us further from self-determination.

What is required is a rediscovering and reclaiming of our sacred heritage of psychospiritual, often promoted in times of adventurous encounters. This view extends beyond the boundaries of intellectual debate, and is often prophetically represented within

contemporary popular culture. The style may be totally different, however the lyrics of Browne (1996) take their pattern from the need to develop spiritually when he suggests that:

> Standing in the ocean with the sun burning low in the west
> Like a fire in the cavernous darkness at the heart of the beast
> With my beliefs and possessions, stopped at the frontier in my chest
> At the edge of my country, my back to the sea, looking east
>
> Where the search for truth is conducted with a wink and a nod
> And where power and position are equated with the grace of God
> These times are famine for the soul while for the senses it's a feast
> From the edge of my country, as far as you see, looking east
>
> Hunger in the midnight, hunger at the stroke of noon
> Hunger in the mansion, hunger in the rented room
> Hunger on the TV, hunger on the printed page
> And there's a God sized hunger underneath the laughing and the rage
> In the absence of light, and the deepening night
> Where I wait for the sun, looking east
>
> How long have I left my mind to the powers that be?
> How long will it take to find the higher power moving in me (Browne, 1996)

Although, I have only examined the surface of the power of spirituality, adventure and the process of reconciliation, the direction is clear. A new and pre-cultural construction of adventure is required which includes a synthesis of spiritual realisation; the awareness of traditionally viewed universal connections, as well as notions of intellectual and communal possibilities and the impact of cultural desire. Clearly such a complex understanding is daunting although necessary to integrate adventure within all of our lives. There is however, great value in exploring the diverse avenues of behaviour and experience often associated with adventure. By considering a framework beyond the boundaries of specific professional directions, I am convinced that we will create significant contributions within the fabric of adventure.

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